

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PO

SUBJECT: BUBBLINGS ON THE FAR RIGHT

REF: LISBON 8893 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: AMIDST THE INTER-PARTY DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION OF THE SOARES GOVERNMENT, FAR-RIGHT ACTIVITIES HAVE BECOME MORE VISIBLE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE HAVE-NOTS: FOLLOWING THE DEFEAT OF THE SOARES GOVERNMENT DEC 8, THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE CONTINUED DISCUSSIONS SEEKING AGREEMENT ON A PLATFORM AND COMPOSITION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT. IN THE PROCESS, THE PARTIES HAVE CONTINUOUSLY RESTATED THEIR POSITIONS ON ISSUES TO REASSURE THEIR MEMBERS AND CONSTITUENCIES. THE ONLY SECTOR OF THE PORTUGUESE POLITICAL SPECTRUM NOT REPRESENTED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE FAR RIGHT, HAS ALSO STEPPED UP ITS ACTIVITIES IN AN EFFORT TO AVOID GETTING LOST IN THE SHUFFLE AND TO RESTRICT MOVEMENT BY THE PSD AND CDS TOWARD A POSSIBLE AGREEMENT WITH THE PS. A SAMPLE:

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2. RIGHTIST GROUPS MERGE: ADMIRAL PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO, PRIME MINISTER IN THE SIXTH PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, MERGED HIS MINUSCULE PORTUGUESE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) AND WAS ELECTED PDC PRESIDENT DURING THE PARTY'S FOURTH CONGRESS DEC 17-18. DURING THE WEEK PRECEDING THE PDC

CONGRESS, AZEVEDO HAD PROPOSED THAT HIS MOVEMENT JOIN WITH THE PDC AND KAULZA DE ARRIAGA'S INDEPENDENT MOVEMENT FOR NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION (MIRN) TO FORM A "HUMANIST, ANTIMATERIALISTIC, ANTI-MARXIST, ANTI-ATHEISTIC FRONT" TO CONTEST NEW ELECTIONS. ALTHOUGH MIRN DID NOT CONFIRM THAT IT WOULD JOIN IN SUCH A FRONT, ONE OF ITS FOUNDERS, ANTONIO VALDEZ DOS SANTOS, WAS ELECTED THE PDC SECRETARY-GENERAL.

3. MIRN: NEAMWHILE, ARRIAGA'S MIRN ANNOUNCED THAT IT IS ACTIVELY AND SUCCESSFULLY RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR ITS YOUTH AFFILIATE IN LISBON AND OTHER URBAN AREAS. ARRIAGA ALSO RECENTLY STATED THAT HE MIGHT SEEK FORMAL PARTY STATUS FOR MIRN. ON DEC 14, ARRIAGA PUBLISHED ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF COMMUNIQUEES CALLING FOR TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT, A PRESIDENTIALLY-APPOINTED GOVERNMENT OF INDEPENDENTS, NEW ELECTIONS, AND REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION. SYMPATHETIC NEWSPAPERS CONTINUE TO PLAY UP ARRIAGA'S "LUNCHES" WITH KISSINGER AND BRZEZINSKI AND HIS TALKS WITH EUROPEAN POLITICIANS (REFTEL.

4. GALVAO DE MELO BEATS HIS DRUMS: GENERAL GALVAO DE MELO, A CONSERVATIVE WHO HAS SOUGHT TO CHAMPION THE CAUSE OF THE RETURNEES FROM THE FORMER COLONIES, SPOKE TO A GROUP OF "FRIENDS" IN OPORTO DEC 17. HE ATTACKED THE LEFTIST PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENTS, CLAIMED THAT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLITICAL PARTIES WOULD BE UNABLE TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE CURRENT POLITICAL IMPASSE, AND CALLED FOR NEW ELECTIONS AND A STABLE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY BASED UPON A COALITION OF PARTIES TO THE RIGHT OF THE SOCIALISTS. BUT NOT TOO FAR RIGHT--ON DEC 21, GALVAO DE MELO PUBLISHED A LETTER TO KAULZA DA ARRIAGA, IN WHICH HE ATTACKED THE MIRN LEADER FOR "AN EXCESS OF PERSONAL AMBITION" AND A DESIRE TO BE PRESIDENT, WHATEVER THE REGIME."

5. COMMENT: NONE OF THE GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS MENTIONED COMMANDS SIGNIFICANT POPULAR SUPPORT. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, THE ONLY ONE OF THESE GROUPS WHICH CONTESTED THE 1976 ELECTIONS, RECEIVED ONLY ONE-HALF OF ONE PERCENT OF THE VOTE. TO EXPAND, THE ULTRA-RIGHTISTS WOULD HAVE TO CUT INTO PSD AND CDS CONSTITUENCIES. HOWEVER, SA CARNEIRO, BY MOVING THE PSD SHARPLY TO THE RIGHT, HAS FOR THE TIME BEING PREEMPTED THE FIELD. BOTH ARRIAGA AND AZEVEDO KNOW THEY CANNOT COMPETE WITH SA CARNEIRO'S POPULARITY AMONG CONSERVATIVE VOTERS. AZEVEDO IS A SICK MAN, BUT BECAUSE OF HIS NAME STILL HAS SOME POLITICAL POTENTIAL AS A FRONT. ARRIAGA IS A SLIGHTLY MORE CREDIBLE THREAT, BUT THE FAR RIGHT STILL NEEDS A

CHARISMATIC PERSONALITY IF IT IS TO MAKE AN IMPACT AMONG
PORTUGUESE VOTERS. GALVAO DE MELO IS NOT THE ANSWER.
ADRIANO MOREI, FORMER OVERSEAS MINISTER UNDER SALAZAR
WHO IS RUMORED TO BE RETURNING FROM BRAZIL, HAS MORE
POTENTIAL.

6. THE STRENGTH OF THE FAR RIGHTS AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, LIES
IN ITS ABILITY TO RESTRICT THE MOVEMENT OF THE PSD AND CDS
TO THE LEFT. BOTH PARTIES WANT TO PROTECT THEMSELVES ON THE
RIGHT AND ARE RELUCTANT TO ABANDON CONSERVATIVE VOTERS TO
ARRIAGA AND HIS ILK.
CARLUCCI

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